

Response

The claims were amended in accordance with the amendments above. The amendments to the claims are being made to clarify the invention and to focus the claims on those aspects of the invention which are a commercial priority to the Assignee. All of the amendments are fully supported by the specification, claims, and figures as originally filed. No new matter is believed or intended to be involved.

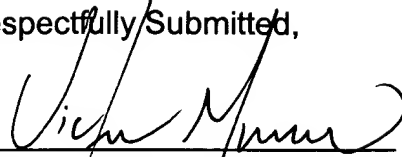
Applicants appreciate the courtesies extended during the telephonic interview with the Examiner on 03/30/2005. Applicants appreciate the Examiner's indication during the interview that the present amendments appeared to overcome the prior art cited in the pending Office Action. Applicants acknowledge that the Examiner reserved the right to supplement his search.

As was also discussed in the interview, definition for the term "grapevine protocol," as that term is recited in claim 112, may be found in at least the following portions of the specification: page 14 (beginning at line 15), page 17 (beginning at line 7), page 33 (beginning at line 2), and page 45 (beginning at line 22).

To the extent that the amendments constitute a narrowing of the claims, such narrowing of the claims should not be construed as an admission as to the merits of the prior rejections. Indeed, Applicants traverse the rejections and preserve all rights and arguments. Applicants further note that the dependent claims include additional limitations not taught or suggested in the art of record, thus forming independent basis for novelty and non-obviousness.

Based on the foregoing, all pending claims are in a condition for allowance. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and an early notice of allowance.

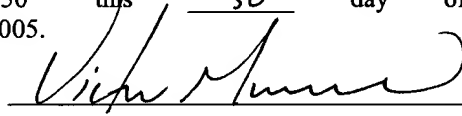
Respectfully Submitted,



Victor C. Moreno (Reg. No. 40,732)
Frost Brown Todd LLC
2500 PNC Center
201 East Fifth Street
Cincinnati, Ohio 45202-4182
513-651-6812 (direct)
513-651-6981 (fax)

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